IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A guar gum powder product of the process comprising:
   (a) hydrating guar gum splits;
   (b) processing the hydrated splits, said processing step including the substeps, in either order, of flaking the splits and extruding the splits;
   (c) grinding said processed splits into a powder, the powder having a particle size, wherein the particle size is substantially unaffected by extruding the splits; and
   (d) drying the powder.

2. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the guar gum splits comprise polygalactomannan and the particle size is unchanged by extruding the splits.

3. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the guar gum splits have been chemically modified.

4. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the guar gum splits have been genetically modified.

5. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the extruding substep in step (b) encourages said powder product to hydrate faster.

6. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the extruding substep in step (b) encourages said powder product to hydrate at a faster rate of acceleration.

7. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the extruding substep in step (b) encourages said powder product to hydrate faster and with a faster hydration acceleration rate.

8. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the extruding substep in step (b) causes said powder product to hydrate at a rate that is affected less by lower temperatures.

9. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the extruding substep in step (b) causes said powder product to hydrate at a rate of acceleration that is affected less by lower temperatures.

10. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the extruding substep in step (b) causes said powder product to (1) hydrate at a rate ~~of acceleration~~ that is affected less by lower temperatures, and (2) hydrate at a rate of acceleration that is affected less by lower temperatures.

11. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ said powder product achieves about 90% hydration after about 5 minutes at about 70 degrees F.

12. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ said powder product achieves about 90% hydration after about 5 minutes at about 40 degrees F.

13. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ said powder product achieves about 50% hydration after about 60 seconds at about 70 degrees F.

14. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ said powder product achieves about 50% hydration after about 90 seconds at about 40 degrees F.

15. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ said powder product achieves about 90% hydration after about 5 minutes at about 70 degrees F and after about 5 minutes at about 40 degrees F, and wherein ~~in which~~ said powder product further achieves about 50% hydration after about 60 seconds at about 70 degrees F and after about 90 seconds at about 40 degrees F.

16. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~:

the splits are hydrated in step (a) to about a 20% - 80% moisture content at about 80 - 200 degrees F;

the hydrated splits are extruded in step (b) through about a 2" - 8" diameter barrel; and

the powder is first dried in step (d) to about a 1% - 10% moisture content and then screened through about a 100 mesh sieve.

17. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 15, wherein ~~in which~~:

the splits are hydrated in step (a) to about a 20% - 80% moisture content at about 80 - 200 degrees F;

the hydrated splits are extruded in step (b) through about a 2" - 8" diameter barrel; and

the powder is first dried in step (d) to about a 1% - 10% moisture content and then screened through about a 100 mesh sieve.

18. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ said powder product is an agent in a host product selected from the group consisting of:

(a) drilling fluid;

(b) fracturing fluid;

(c) animal litter;

(d) explosive;

(e) foodstuff;

(f) paperstock;

(g) floor covering;

(h) synthetic fuel briquettes;

(i) water thickener for firefighting;

(j) shampoo;

(k) personal care lotion;

(l) household cleaner;

(m) catalytic converter catalyst;

(n) electroplating solution;

(o) diapers;

(p) sanitary towels;

(q) super-adsorbent in food packaging;

(r) sticking plasters for skin abrasions;

(s) water-adsorbing bandages;

(t) foliar spray for plants;

(u) suspension for spraying plant seeds;

(v) suspension for spraying plant nutrients;

(w) flotation aid; and

(x) flocculent.

19. (currently amended) A guar gum powder product of the process comprising:

(a) hydrating guar gum splits;

(b) flaking the splits;

(c) extruding the splits;

(d) grinding said processed splits into a powder, the powder having a particle size, wherein the particle size is substantially unaffected by extruding the splits; and

(e) drying the powder.

20. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of claim 19, wherein ~~in which~~ said powder product is an agent in a host product selected from the group consisting of:

(a) drilling fluid;

(b) fracturing fluid;

(c) animal litter;

(d) explosive;

(e) foodstuff;

(f) paperstock;

(g) floor covering;

(h) synthetic fuel briquettes;

(i) water thickener for firefighting;

(j) shampoo;

(k) personal care lotion;

(l) household cleaner;

(m) catalytic converter catalyst;

(n) electroplating solution;

(o) diapers;

(p) sanitary towels;

(q) super-adsorbent in food packaging;

(r) sticking plasters for skin abrasions;

(s) water-adsorbing bandages;

(t) foliar spray for plants;

(u) suspension for spraying plant seeds;

(v) suspension for spraying plant nutrients;

(w) flotation aid; and

(x) flocculent.

21. (currently amended) The guar gum powder product of the process comprising:

(a) hydrating guar gum splits to about a 20% - 80% moisture content at about 80 - 200 degrees F;

(b) flaking the splits;

(c) extruding the splits through about a 2" - 8" diameter barrel;

(d) grinding the splits into a powder, the powder having a particle size, wherein the particle size is substantially unaffected by extruding the splits; and

(e) drying the powder to about a 1% - 10% moisture content.

22. (currently amended) The guar gum product of claim 21, wherein ~~in which~~ said powder product is screened through about a 100 mesh sieve.

23. (currently amended) An improved guar gum powder product formed by a method including the steps of hydrating guar gum splits, processing the hydrated splits, grinding the processed splits into a powder, and then drying the powder, wherein said processing step includes the substep of flaking the splits, the improvement comprising:

also extruding the splits in said processing step, wherein the powder has a particle size substantially unaffected by extruding the splits.

24. (currently amended) The improved guar gum powder product of claim 23, wherein ~~in which~~ the guar gum splits comprise polygalactomannan and the particle size is unchanged by extruding the splits.

25. (currently amended) The improved guar gum powder product of claim 23, wherein ~~in which~~ the guar gum splits have been chemically modified.

26. (currently amended) The improved guar gum powder product of claim 23, wherein ~~in which~~ the guar gum splits have been genetically modified.